

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 01536 031324Z

43

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-05 AID-05 IO-10 /086 W

----- 005519

R 031153Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2665

DIA WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD UNN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USCINCEUR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BEIRUT 1536

E.O. 11652: N/A DECON 2-3-76

TAGS: PINS PMIL PLO XF

SUBJECT: INTERVIEW WITH PLA COMMANDER BUDAYRI

1. IN INTERVIEW CARRIED BEIRUT'S ENGLISH-LANGUAGE DAILY STAR
JAN 31, PALESTINE LIBERATION ARMY (PLA) COMMANDER GEN. MISBAH AL
BUDAYRI REVEALED EXISTENCE OF A "REALLY DEEP" RIFT IN PLA'S
RELATIONS WITH PLO LEADERSHIP. HE COMPLAINED OF CURRENT LOW
STATE OF PLA MORALE AND EQUIPMENT, WHICH HE BLAMED ON SOVIET
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 BEIRUT 01536 031324Z

REFUSAL TO DELIVER ARMS DIRECTLY TO PLA AND ON 'ARAFAT'S

"REFUSAL" TO DEAL WITH MOSCOW ON PLA'S BEHALF. IN ADDITION, SAID BUDAYRI, PLA-PLO DIFFERENCES STEM FROM TWO DIFFERENT KINDS OF THINKING: "WE'RE REGULAR SOLDIERS WHO THINK IN TERMS OF POSSIBILITIES. FEDAYEEN ARE POLITICAL IDEALISTS" (WHO PRESUMABLY THINK IN TERMS OF NON-POSSIBILITIES).

2. BUDAYRI, WHO WAS SPEAKING IN DAMASCUS, DESCRIBED PLA WITH CONSIDERABLE BITTERNESS AS "THE BIGGEST FORCE (7,000 MEN) AMONG PALESTINIANS, BUT ALSO THE POOREST". HE CLAIMED "ARAB LEAGUE OWES US MORE THAN 15 MILLION POUNDS STERLING IN BACK DEBTS", ADDING: "NO WONDER WE CAN'T AFFORD UP-TO-DATE EQUIPMENT". WHEN ASKED IF KING FEISAL'S RECENT DOLS 8.5 MILLION DONATION TO PLO MIGHT HELP BRIGHTEN PLA'S FINANCIAL PICTURE, BUDAYRI SAID WITH A GRIN: "JUST WAIT UNTIL THEY (PLO LEADERSHIP) DECIDE HOW MUCH THE PLA WILL GET--THEN I'LL TELL YOU MY OPINION OF YASIR 'ARAFAT'".

3. BUDAYRI SPOKE WITH LITTLE ENTHUSIASM ABOUT FEDAYEEN MILITARY SKILLS, NOTING THA PLA COOPERATION WITH FEDAYEEN ACTIVITY IN LEBANON IS "LIMITED". HE WAS PARTICULARLY CRITICAL OF WHAT CALLED "LEFT-WING" FEDAYEEN GROUPS, SAYING/ "I DON'T APPROVE OF THEM. AS A SOLDIER, I'M ONLY CONCERNED WITH LIBERATING MY LAND. WHAT'S THE USE OF BEING A SOCIALIST OR A COMMUNIST WHEN YOU'VE GOT NO LAND WHERE YOU CAN PUT YOUR IDEALS INTO PRACTICE"? (BUDAYRI ALSO TOLD HIS INTERVIEWER THAT HE STRONGLY OPPOSES "OPERATIONS THAT KILL INNOCENT WOMEN AND CHILDREN", BUT DAILY STAR SAW FIT TO DELETE THIS REMARK FROM JAN 31 ARTICLE. WE OBTAINED THIS INFO FROM BUDAYRI'S INTERVIEWER.) HE ALSO DENIED THAT PLA INTERFERES IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ANY ARAB STATE, NOTING: "WE'RE FRIENDLY WITH ALL ARABS-- EVEN KING HUSSEIN."

4. BUDAYRI CONFIRMED THAT PLA UNITS ARE PRESENT " IN SOME STRENGTH" IN SOUTH LEBANON BUT REFUSED TO ADMIT PLA PRESENCE THATE HAS INCREASED MEASURABLY SINCE SRYIAN PRES ASSAD'S JAN 7 VISIT TO LEBANON. HE DID SAY, HOWEVER, THAT PLA WOULD REMAIN IN LEBANON AND THAT SIZE OF ITS FORCES THERE WOULD BE INCREASED BY "LOCAL RECRUITMENT" BECAUSE "WE ARE CERTAIN THERE WILL BE NO POLITICAL SETTLEMENT (WITH ISRAEL)". BUDAYRI ALSO STATED THAT IF ISRAELI FORCES WERE TO "INVADE" SOUTH LEBANON, PLA WOULD TAKE PART IN OPERATIONS AGAINST THEM. FOR PRESENT, HE NOTED, GOL IS NOT PREPARED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 BEIRUT 01536 031324Z

PERMIT MILITARY OPERATIONS FROM LEBANESE TERRITORY ACROSS BORDER WITH ISRAEL, BUT "IF SYRIA, EGYPT OR ANY OTHER ARAB STATE DECIDES TO FIGHT IN FUTURE, WE BELIEVE SOUTH LEBANON WOULD BE GOOD PLACE TO OPERATE".

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH BUDAYRI SPEAKS OUT ONLY INFREQUENTLY IN PUBLIC , HE HAS REPUTATION OF BEING A "FREE SPIRIT" WHOSE UNVARNISHED VIEWS

OFTEN TEND TO CONFLICT WITH THOSE OF FEDAYEEN MOVEMENT IN GENERAL AND PLO "ESTABLISHMENT" IN PARTICULAR. (WE RECALL HIS ENLIVENING PERFORMANCE AT JAN 1973 PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETINGS IN CAIRO, WHERE HE OUTRAGED HIS FELLOW PALESTINIANS BY DARING TO SPEAK KINDLY OF KING HUSSEIN--SEE OUT A-15 OF JAN 24, 1973.) WE UNDERSTAND INTERVIEW DESCRIBED ABOVE TOOK PLACE AT BUDAYRI'S INITIATIVE, APPARENTLY BECAUSE HE FELT TIME HAD COME TO GET SOME FRANK OPINIONS OFF HIS CHEST. PLO SPOKESMEN HERE HAVE SO FAR DECLINED COMMENT ON HIS PUBLISHED REMARKS, TELLING NEWSMEN ONLY THAT THEY ARE BEING EXAMINED "AT HIGHEST LEVELS" IN PLO LEADERSHIP.
GODLEY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, PRESS CONFERENCES, LIBERATION FRONTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: SmithRJ
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BEIRUT01536
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750038-0890
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750279/aaaactdg.tel
Line Count: 126
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <24 OCT 2003 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: INTERVIEW WITH PLA COMMANDER BUDAYRI
TAGS: PINS, PINT, XF, PLO
To: STATE DIA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006